

CENTRALIZED SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MANAGING ENTERPRISE OPERATIONS

Abstract

INS. F1 A projected management server coupled with a computer network, such as the Internet.

5 In one embodiment a spec server is also incorporated into the project management environment for completing specs, generating requests for price quotations, purchase orders and the like. A project tree represents project management objects. Project management objects can be of any type. Object types are defined for each particular implementation of the system. Typical examples of project management object types include organizational entities, work-groups,
10 people, projects, budgets, tasks, costs, timesheets, specs, requisitions, purchase orders, to-do lists etc. The objects are organized in a hierarchical data structure referred to as a project management tree or project tree. Each object in the project tree comprises a number of methods that describe the way the object behaves. Such methods include for example, methods that describe the way the object is added to the tree, edited, deleted from the tree, and archived. An infinite class of objects are supported so that systems can be customized for any type of environment. In a typical embodiment a key user sets-up the initial environment for the project management system including setting up the structure of the enterprise, defining users, specifying user-groups, user access rights, passwords, etc. Once the initial system is set-up, users log-in to the project management system from locations within or outside of the enterprises. The system determines the identity of the user, and based on the identity and user access rights, presents the user with a particular view of the project management tree customized for the user. The user can then navigate through sections of the project tree for which the user is authorized. Users can interact with the project management system by performing functions on that portion of the project tree in which they are authorized to perform functions. Functions include adding, editing deleting and archiving project management objects. Users from multiple organizational work-groups participate using the project management system in a collaborative fashion. Specs are generated, suppliers are matched with specs, RFQs are sent to suppliers, suppliers bid on jobs, jobs are awarded by buyers and purchase orders are generated.